

From: Jeremy R. Hammond jeremy@foreignpolicyjournal.com
Subject: My Thoughts on Coronavirus
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To: Judy jamikovits@gmail.com



Jeremy R. Hammond's Newsletter

Hi Judy,

So far, I haven't written any articles about the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-19, which is causing the disease COVID-19 in what has become a global pandemic. But I'd like to share my current thoughts about it exclusively with you, my newsletter subscribers.

I've seen a tendency of people falling into one of two extremes on this topic: those who dismiss the virus as no big deal and those who take an alarmist position and advocate radical draconian measures by government to prevent transmission.

The threat is real and serious. But we must remain calm and rational. So, with that said, here are my further thoughts about it:

It's Not a BioWeapon

I'm aware of a widespread belief that the virus was lab engineered as a biological weapon. The evidence, though, shows otherwise. The complete genetic sequence of the virus has been released, and while I have no expertise to determine this for myself, there is a consensus among serious researchers -- including scientists whom I trust like James Lyons-Weiler -- that it evolved as opposed to being genetically engineered.

However, that does not rule out, as far as I can tell, the possibility that it was evolved in a lab by deliberately passing a virus originating in bats through one or more other animal species.

It also does not rule out the possibility that it evolved in nature and was being studied in the lab in Wuhan, China, but escaped from containment. There have been numerous instances in which deadly pathogens have escaped from labs, including influenza and other coronaviruses.

Maybe it's a coincidence that the market that served as the epicenter of the outbreak is not far from a bio lab known for research into deadly pathogens. I don't

rule out the possibility that it's not. But I am convinced that it was not genetically engineered either to serve as a weapon or just for research purposes.

I'm also aware of the belief that the virus did not originate in China at all, but was brought there from the US, but the sources I've seen making this claim are not credible and grossly misrepresent their own primary sources. In particular, they've falsely characterized a study examining its origins whose authors absolutely did *not* suggest that it originated anywhere other than Hubei Province in China, which is where the city of Wuhan is located.

It's Not as Deadly as It's Been Made Out to Be

There is no question that this virus can be deadly. However, the threat has been greatly overblown by the media, and governments -- including the one in my home state of Michigan -- have greatly overreacted in ways that not only threaten individual liberty and cause severe harm to the economy, but which may also do more harm than good in the long run in terms of mitigating the threat from the virus.

We've all seen reports that the fatality rate is somewhere between 2 percent and 4 percent of cases, but that is highly misleading. Fortunately, I have seen some mainstream media reports explaining that we have no idea what the true fatality rate is since we have no idea how many cases may be so mild or asymptomatic and that therefore aren't reported.

Accumulating evidence shows that *the vast majority* of cases are mild or asymptomatic. A reanalysis of data from China by Japanese researchers estimated that the fatality rate there is not 4% but *0.04%* -- orders of magnitude lower.

That's just an estimate and may also be incorrect, but the point is that considering only *reported* cases in the denominator of the case fatality ratio inevitably results in overestimation of the death rate.

Furthermore, the data are absolutely clear that those at high risk of dying from the virus are elderly people with comorbidities such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, or cancer.

Children are generally unaffected by severe disease, which remains a mystery to scientists, but more on that below.

The bad news is that widespread asymptomatic infection means that the virus is more widespread than it appears. The good news is that it means it's not nearly as

...more missteps than it appears. The government's actions are not nearly as deadly as it's been made out to be.

Our Liberty Is at as Much at Risk as Our Health (or More So)

Government policies have been enacted to help "flatten the curve" by slowing transmission to prevent hospitals from being overwhelmed and supplies from running out. And that makes sense. But the benefits of any policy must be weighed against its harms and opportunity costs, and it is clear to me that governments are greatly overreacting.

The US federal government as well as state governments have reacted by literally shutting down the economy. This obviously causes great harm to practically everyone. And shortsighted policymakers aren't considering the opportunity costs of their radical draconian policies.

Here in Michigan, for example, the governor some time ago by executive order shut down schools for three weeks. At the same time, the CDC issued reasonable recommendations for school closures pointing out that such shutdowns (a) are not likely to be effective for slowing transmission since the timing isn't optimal and (b) could do more harm than good. For example, 40% of grandparents are involved in childcare for grandchildren, which was likely to increase as a result of school closures, *thereby increasing the risk to those for whom the virus poses the greatest threat.*

The optimal time for and duration of school closures can *only* be reasonably determined at the district and county level. The idea that the optimal time to close one school is *the exact same time as every other school in the state* is totally irrational and ignores the fact that it takes time for the virus to spread from one area to another. (There are still no reported cases in my county, and it is clear to me that schools here should not have been closed so prematurely.)

The governor also ordered by fiat the closure of numerous businesses, including restaurants, bars, and gyms. So this has created the problem of many people being unable to earn income and hence unable to pay their bills.

Policymakers don't seem to have considered the question of whether pushing countless people toward financial ruin is a cost worth paying. Instead, politicians like to appear as though they are "doing something", and when people are living in fear, they are willing to accept extreme authoritarian measures that set dangerous precedents in terms of threatening our precious liberties.

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This is particularly frightening to me in a climate of fear where our right to informed consent is already under assault and mandatory vaccination is being pushed on everyone. If we do not defend our rights, mandatory use of an experimental coronavirus vaccine is not beyond the realm of possibility, and if that were to happen, the harm to the population could be severe and irreversible.

Policies *could* have been enacted to help flatten the curve *without* causing severe harm to the economy, starting with simply educating the public and trusting that people will act in their own best interests rather than treating us all as too stupid to think for ourselves and make our own decisions.

Enabling Natural Herd Immunity Is a Sensible Solution

Furthermore, draconian policies are aimed at *ceasing* transmission of the virus whereas there is a strong case to be made for instead just *mitigating* transmission.

Definitely, we want to flatten the curve, but what makes the most sense to me is to allow transmission to continue in a *controlled* manner. We don't want to exhaust resources, and we obviously need to protect those at highest risk. And one of the best ways we could do that is by enabling the development of natural herd immunity.

Some governments, including in the UK and Netherlands, have openly discussed this option, *and it is certainly no more radical an idea than shutting down the whole economy in a vain attempt to cease transmission altogether!*

It would be beneficial for the population if those of us who aren't at high risk were to become infected and to develop immunity. In time, herd immunity would naturally develop, which would serve to protect those at highest risk over the long-term.

For example, before the vaccine was introduced in the US, those at highest risk for measles were protected through natural herd immunity. Infection with measles was naturally constrained to an age when it posed only a small risk, thus protecting those at ages when it poses a high risk of potentially deadly complications.

The SARS-CoV-19 virus is out of the box, so to speak, and *there is no way to put it back inside*. It is something we are going to have to learn to live with, just like we live with endemic strains of coronavirus that are a common cause of the common cold, with rhinoviruses, influenza, etc.

The basic assumption underlying the theory of vaccination, that viruses and pathogens are an "enemy" which we should attempt to eradicate from the face of

the planet, is at odds with reality. A significant proportion of our own human DNA is viral in origin, and we have more bacterial cells in our body than human cells. There *is* such a thing as living in harmonious balance with our environment and in symbiotic relationships with nature. And it's not as though humans didn't evolve (or weren't created, if you believe in God) with a functioning immune system designed to protect us from potential pathogens. Mass disease occurs when humans choose to live out of balance with their environment and upset the natural order of things. The key is to restore balance and harmony.

By trying to block transmission through draconian measures, governments are not just harming the economy but also just keeping populations vulnerable to continued outbreaks by preventing the development of population immunity that would protect those at greatest risk.

How to Protect Yourself and Your Loved Ones

As I mentioned, children are generally unaffected by severe COVID-19 disease. One intriguing explanation I've read is that this is in large part due to children have much higher levels of melatonin, which is important not just for regulation of the sleep-wake cycle but also for immune function. As we age, our bodies produce less, which helps explain why the risk of death from the virus increases with age (along with the fact that younger children don't suffer from chronic illnesses that are risk factors among the elderly).

It's not the virus that is killing people per se, but their own immune system's overreaction to it. Melatonin helps regulate the immune system so as to prevent the inflammatory "cytokine storm" that is actually the cause of death in COVID-19 cases.

But regardless of one's age, there are things you can do to help ensure a properly functioning immune system, starting with ditching sugary processed foods that are loaded with toxins and instead eating a healthful, nutritious diet.

It's not my place to offer anyone medical advice, but I'm happy to share some of the things I'm taking into consideration as this virus spreads through the population. Consider it knowledge to do with as you please. *Take it or leave it!*

My wife, son, and I eat organic foods as much as we can afford, selectively choosing organic options for those types of foods that would pose the highest risk from toxic pesticides and herbicides were we to buy conventional, like green leafy vegetables.

We are mindful of the ingredients in foods and try to fulfill our daily nutritional

needs as much as possible through diet. We also supplement as we feel necessary.

Vitamin A is one important nutrient that plays an important role in mucosal immunity, which involves the lining of your respiratory tract and lungs.

Vitamin C is known to be important for immune function protecting against viral infections, as is vitamin D. (The argument can and has been made in the medical literature that influenza is essentially a disease of vitamin D insufficiency, which helps explain why "flu season" coincides with a time when people aren't getting enough vitamin D through sunshine exposure.)

Some substances which are important for detoxification processes also have been shown to serve a role in immunity against viral infections, such as glutathione and its precursors, including free form amino acids, alpha-lipoic acid, and N-acetyl cysteine.

Exercise is also very important for maintaining healthy immune function. (I exercise, but this is something I *definitely* need to make more time for myself as I don't exercise nearly as much as I should.)

Stress management is another important consideration. Just going outdoors and getting fresh air is an effective means of anxiety control for me, which is one of the reasons why I like running (although I really need to hit the weights more).

Apart from nutrition, exercise, and stress management, a little bit of common sense goes a long way. The CDC -- which usually I'm criticizing -- in this case reasonably concluded in its advice on school closings that common sense measure are likely just as effect in mitigating the spread of the virus as statewide shutdowns.

Avoid crowds as much as possible, don't touch your face, be extra diligent about washing your hands, throw your clothes in the laundry and take a shower when you come home from public outings, cough and sneeze into your elbow, wear a properly fitted mask if you have symptoms of illness to help prevent spreading it to others, don't visit the grandparents if you have any reason to believe you or your children have been exposed, run the grandparents' errands for them if you can so they don't have to risk going out, and so on.

Above all, I am concerned about people acting on fear in irrational ways. Stay calm, assess the risk to you and your family rationally, plan ahead for contingencies, take sensible precautionary measures, *and don't consent to your liberties being taken away under the guise of a false sense of security from shortsighted government policies that are presently doing untold harm to our economy and possibly also to the long-term health of the population.*

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I am frankly far more afraid of authoritarian governmental reactions to the virus and the setting of dangerous precedents than I am of the virus itself.

Take care,

Jeremy

P.S. -- I've just completed a very important collaborative project with Children's Health Defense, so stay tuned for that. Now I need to decide which of the articles currently in my pipeline I should focus on next, and I'd like your input.

Will you please take a moment to answer this one-question survey to help me prioritize?

Click here to give me your opinion about what article I should deliver next.



Jeremy R. Hammond

Independent Journalist, Author, and Writing Coach

www.jeremyrhammond.com

Publisher & Editor

www.foreignpolicyjournal.com



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Jeremy R. Hammond
P.O. Box 181
Cross Village, Michigan 49723
United States

